



AND THEN THERE WAS ONE...

by Ben Stein, BWI President

A few weeks ago, we all woke to the news that Active Interest Media's (AIM) marine titles have been purchased by Firecrown. For those that don't know, Firecrown, formerly known as Flying Media, purchased nearly all of Bonnier's titles towards the end of last year. Firecrown now owns more than a dozen marine titles and nearly all the familiar, nationally focused marine magazines.

This presents an interesting situation for our industry and us as writers with potentially positive and negative developments. With all Firecrown's titles, freelancers may have just gained additional titles who would be interested in running their pieces without concern about crossing competitive boundaries. However, there is also an open question as to whether Firecrown will continue all of their titles for the long haul.

Fortunately, early reports from former Bonnier and now Firecrown employees is quite positive. The word on the street is that Firecrown is a well-run organization with a focus on the quality of the product they produce. If what Firecrown has done with their first publication, Flying Magazine, is any indication, they may also come up with creative ways to make the boating

magazine business profitable for the long haul.

Lest you feel we are alone; the trend of title consolidation is found in plenty of other industries. Perhaps the closest parallel comes from car magazines. Hearst Magazines recently completed the acquisition of MotorTrend Group and their titles including MotorTrend, Hot Rod, Roadkill, and Automobile. These titles join Car and Driver and Road & Track magazines and represent the vast majority of car magazine circulation. Although the parallel doesn't provide a road map, it may offer some guidance over time.

The AIM acquisition isn't the only change our industry has seen recently. Just in time for IBEX, Wooden Boat Publications published the last issue of Professional BoatBuilder under their ownership. Earlier in the year the two-man editorial staff was laid off and the publication quietly put up for sale.

At IBEX, Aaron Porter was hired as IBEX's Editorial Director and just in time for METSTRIDE, IBEX announced they purchased Professional Boatbuilder. This feels like the closure a loop as IBEX, the show started by Professional BoatBuilder has now purchased

the very title that created it. This too may create some opportunity for BWI members as IBEX branches out into editorial pursuits.

It is no secret that the magazine business continues to change and evolve. This year has certainly given us plenty of examples of that change. Recent years have seen the demise of numerous familiar and beloved titles. So, I'm relieved to see the recent changes have been changes in ownership rather than shuttering of titles. The coming years are likely to continue to be interesting and potentially a little bumpy. But, we've weathered a lot change together and you're still here reading this message. I look forward to seeing the impact of these changes in the coming year and hope they are positive for our membership.

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POWER
& MOTORYACHT



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Trade Only

Trawlerfest
BOATSHOW • EDUCATION • RENDEZVOUS

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CANDIDATES SOUGHT FOR BWI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elections for BWI Directors will be held in mid-January 2025. Three seats (that carry a three-year term) are coming open. Active members may run for director spots. Duties include participation at two in-person director meetings per year (no expenses paid), usually held at Miami and Ft. Lauderdale boat shows, availability for as-needed conference calls (2-4 per year), committee work, and serving as a BWI Contest category chair. For more information, contact Zuzana Prochazka newbwiinfo@gmail.com.

Candidates need to provide a brief summary (100 words by January 5, 2025) of their qualifications and ideas to help BWI grow. Summaries are reviewed by the nominating committee which consists of the current President, Immediate Past President and Executive Director. A ballot will be available to the entire membership when voting opens in January.

BWI 32ND ANNUAL CONTEST NOW CLOSED

The 2024 contest opened November 15 and closed December 15.

1. 16 of 16 categories qualified
2. Judges reviewing entries now
3. Prize giving at MIBS in February 2025

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WELCOME

New Members

Rebecca Blackson

Idaho Falls, ID

Owen Burke

Brooklyn, NY

Joseph Cloidt

Indianapolis, IN

Mathew Cohen

Newport, RI

Nicholas Croken

Edmonton, Canada

Steve Early

Chesapeake, VA

Emma Garschagen

South Portland, ME

Jeff Hull

Missoula, MT

Hugo Kugiya

Seattle, WA

John Payne

Australia

Brianna Randall

Missoula, MT

Joe Rode

Upland, CA

Charles Scott

Ann Arbor, MI

Richard Steinberger

Beaufort, SC

Stephen Titus

Boulder, CO

Mathew Trulio

Huntington Beach, CA

Onne van der Wal

Newport, RI

The BWI Journal is produced by and for members of Boating Writers International and can be found at www.bwi.org. Send items to be considered for publication to newbwiinfo@gmail.com. All information contained herein is meant for the use of members, is in their best interest, and appears in as true and accurate a form as possible. Membership in BWI is open to anyone involved in the recreational boating industry. Active members are generally writers, editors, photographers, videographers and broadcasters. Supporting members are usually manufacturers or marine organizations.